

# Our Church

## St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 West Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403  
717/843-8155 – st.paulsyork@comcast.net  
www.stpaulsyork.org

January 2021

Sunday Holy Eucharist 8 AM & 10:30 AM  
Sunday Vespers 5 PM  
Holy Days as announced

### Ideas for a New Year in Christ

In this New Year it will be helpful for all of us if we can reduce our expectations. While there has been lots of emphasis on the many vaccines that will soon be available, such medical breakthroughs will not immediately permit us to resume life as in former times. Our mitigation strategies will most likely be with us for the greater part of this year. Even when the medical community announces a hoped for level of safety, patterns that have developed during 2020 I suspect will not quickly vanish. For such reasons planning for our life together is incredibly challenging. It is tantamount that we keep our expectations of one another and our faith community in check.



As Christian people our faith life centers on the central act of public worship. It is one of the marks of the church. It is what gives witness to our system of shared beliefs about God; the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We gather on the day of Resurrection, on the first day of the week, Sunday. During this time of pandemic maintaining such gatherings has presented unique challenges of their own. And I suspect that will continue into our future.

I am aware of a need for Christian fellowship as many in our faith community have struggled with isolation. And I am aware of a need for Christian education as we wrestle with faith and life in daily living. At this point I have cast aside all that was inked onto our 2021 congregation calendar and have begun with renewed dedication planning anew. What follows are some ideas that hopefully can come to fruition. What I am striving for are places where while distanced we can be more physically engaged in the doing of worship in our homes.

The Baptism of our Lord, Sunday, January 10. A liturgy for home use is provided in this issue. I encourage families to use it. Assign parts to all members. Fill a basin with water, offer the prayers, and sign each other with water, tracing a watery cross on the forehead. Pray the Lord's Prayer. Other suggestions for upcoming feast days are not as clearly thought out. On the Feast of the Transfiguration, Sunday February 14 consider dividing the Gospel reading into multiple parts and create a graphic novel. Each person illustrates an aspect of the text from Mark 9:2-9. Then read your story book out loud. Ash Wednesday, February 17 has the dilemma of physical touching when tracing the cross on the forehead. So perhaps you could secure a safe place to kindle a fire. After the fire goes out and cools use some of the charcoaled wood to make your own ashes and place the sign of the cross on one another using the words "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." Look at the cross in a mirror. Record the statements made by members of the household. Link your home fire pit, to the new fire we shall make at the Vigil of Easter on April 3. Attend the outside portion of the Easter Vigil even if comfort levels preclude moving in doors. St. Patrick's Day, March 17. Check out a book from the library or secure information from a reputable website. Read about St. Patrick, his faith and life. Why are saints important to Christian faith? What did he contribute to his faith community? How can you engage your faith now to proclaim God's love in Christ Jesus? Maybe make Irish soda bread and while you enjoy it warm out of the cast iron skillet share stories of your life in Christ.

These are just the beginnings of ideas for a new year. I pray that we can increase our commitment to Christ Jesus as expressed through our community of faith. With greater attention to some simple things that we can experience and by sharing out comes together through photos, phone calls, texts, emails, and social media, our corporate life together can indeed be strengthened.

God's abundant blessings and love,  
Pastor Reep

**Thanksgiving for Baptism  
An Order for Home Use**

*Fill a large bowl with water and place it in the center of those gathered.*

When we were joined to Christ in the waters of Baptism, we were clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Together let us remember our baptism.

**We give you thanks, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and you created heaven and earth.**

By the gift of water you nourish and sustain us and all living things.

**By the waters of the flood you condemned the wicked and saved those whom you had chosen, Noah and his family.**

You led Israel by the pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire through the sea, out of slavery into the freedom of the promised land.

**In the waters of the Jordan your Son was baptized by John and anointed by the Spirit.**

By the baptism of his own death and resurrection your beloved Son has set us free from the bondage to sin and death, and has opened the way to the joy and freedom of everlasting life.

**He made water a sign of the kingdom and of cleansing and rebirth.**

In obedience to this command we make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Through this water remind us of our baptism. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.**

*Each person may make the sign of the cross on their forehead.*

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting, Amen.**

*The liturgy concludes with the Lord's Prayer.*

## CREATE

Beginning January 19, 2021 CREATE will be held on Tuesday evenings via Zoom. Ages 2 through grade 1 will be held 6:00pm till 6:30pm. Grades 2 through Grade 6 will be 6:45pm through 7:15pm.

Prior to January 19 each participant will receive a group of packets, each containing all the supplies that are needed for the designated weekly lesson. The Zoom sessions will include Bible Stories, Church Seasons, Holidays, Crafts and Art Projects. You can also do these sessions on your own with your children. Families will receive a letter with all details the first week of January. Please let me know if you are interested in being part of CREATE Zoom. Packets will be ready for pick up or delivery by January 10.

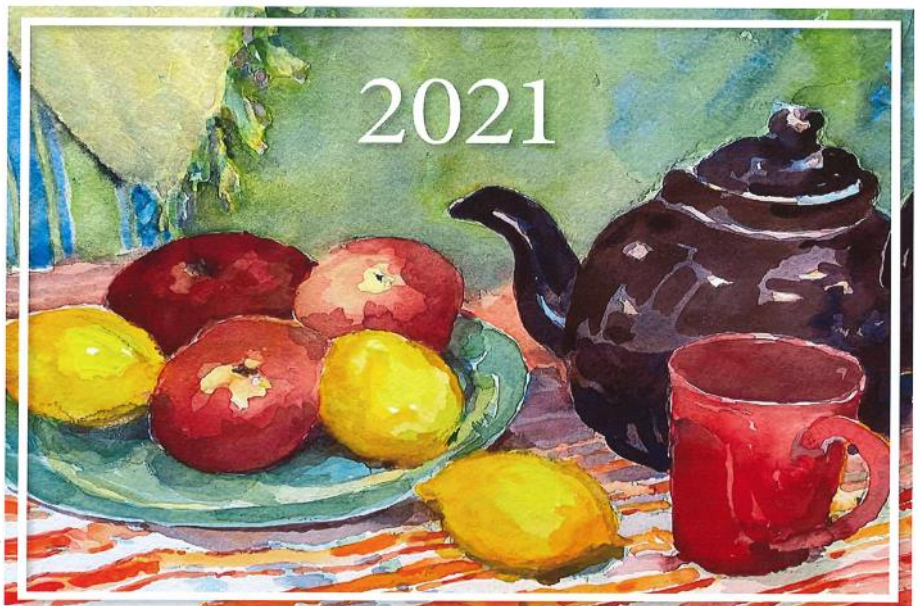


Our family is so grateful for the love and support we have received since Drew's diagnosis. Your gifts, cards, meals, and well wishes have lifted our spirits and filled our hearts. After celebrating the holidays at home, Drew will begin chemotherapy treatments in late December. Throughout his illness, Drew has remained resilient and positive, giving us hope and faith to believe all will be well. Thank you for sharing your love and faith with us and for cheering Drew on each step of the way. Have a wonderful holiday. The Herdson Family



## 2021 Calendar Sale

Make sure you get your copies of the 2021 calendar! They feature the watercolor paintings of Pastor Reep. The images highlight the beautiful cottages from the grounds of the Chautauqua Institute, Chautauqua NY (painted during summer 2019) and fruits and flowers still life arrangements (painted during 2020). We ask for a minimum donation of \$20. All proceeds go to the Capital Campaign. The original paintings will be auctioned at our October 16<sup>th</sup> 2021 event. Thank you for supporting this fundraising effort.



## Food Pantry—January

**Items needed:** Stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, canned pumpkin, canned beans, canned vegetables, apple sauce, canned meats, rice, pasta side dish and jelly. Anyone able to help can contact Teresa Rohrbaugh or Janet and Larry Moore. Plastic Bags are always needed. Money donations are gratefully accepted. Please place cash or check in a "special" envelope marked "Pantry". A special thank-you to the preschool for their donations to the pantry.



## Lessons for Children Wise Men

The Church celebrates the coming of the Wisemen on **January 6**, and we call the day Epiphany. It also marks the day of Jesus coming to the Gentiles. (Those of us who are not Jewish.) Some people wait until January 6 to move their wisemen figures to the creche. This is a great lesson to plan special activities for your family to mark the conclusion of the Christmas Season, **The 12 Days of Christmas**.

Did you know that the wisemen probably didn't arrive until 2 years later? That's what some biblical scholars say. We include them in our creches/manger scenes, but they weren't actually there at the stable. Some people wait until January 6

**The Spark Family Magazine** that came in December has six pages of ideas.

**Read and discuss** the story together in Matthew 2:1-12. It is also found in the Spark Story Bible on page 218 and the Paraclete Bible for Kids on page 203. How did the wisemen know where to go? How do we find our way today?

**Project:** Find a program or organization that supports families with babies such as The Women's Care Center at 40 S. Richland Ave. [York, Pennsylvania | Women's Care Center](#) Find out what they need. Shop together online and deliver gifts to the center. (Be sure to call and check on Covid restrictions)

**Pray:** Thank you God for sending the wonderful gift of your Son, to us and to all the world. Help us to tell others about this gift. Amen.

## John the Baptist

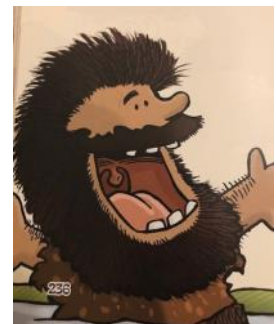
There are only a few stories about Jesus in his early years. Quickly the Bible moves to stories about Jesus and his ministry. The story of John the Baptist and his baptism of Jesus marks the beginning of this ministry.

**The Spark Family Magazine** has four pages of prayers, discussion starters and projects.

**Read and discuss** the story which can be found in all four Gospels in the New Testament. Matthew 11:2-11, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:1-18, and John 1:6-8, 19-28. In the Spark Story Bible, it is found on page 234. You might also want to go right into the story of Jesus Baptism one page 242. The story is also in your Paraclete Bible for kids on page 219. John preached to tell people to get ready for Jesus, the Messiah was coming. Who tells us about Jesus? Who can you tell?

**Project:** During this time when we can't see and visit with church members, friends and family, choose someone to send a card or letter to. Ask how they are and remind them that God loves them.

**Prayer:** Thank you for all the people who tell us about Jesus. Amen



## Adult Faith Formation

Our Advent Study with Pastor Judy McKee on the Women in Jesus Lineage was well received. Over 20 people registered for this Zoom study and we averaged 15 people each week. Thank you, Judy,!

**What Can We Learn from Dietrich Bonhoeffer About Living With the Word?** Join Bishop Carol Hendrix, retired, in conversations on Dietrich Bonhoeffer. We will be looking briefly at Bonhoeffer's writings about daily meditating on the Word, the Psalms as our prayerbook, and the Sermon on the Mount as direction from the Word made Flesh for a life of discipleship. Classes will be on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:00 PM on January 27, February 3 and 10. No prereading required. Contact Patty Snyder 717-578-2253 or the church office 717-843-8155 to register and receive the Zoom link.



## Gingerbread Nativity

The children of St. Paul's were very creative in decorating their Gingerbread Nativities. Families worked together during Zoom and on their own time to finish them. It is always fun to see how they represented all the figures in the story. Enjoy the pictures that they shared.



## A Message from the Finance Committee:

As you know, this year we took on a mortgage debt that contributed to our increased annual spending. The level of debt was necessary because we were unable to reach our capital campaign goals and the expenses related to the renovation exceeded our projections. On the positive side, we have a renewed building that allows us to grow our ministry. As well, debt is not necessarily a bad thing when used properly. Today's interest rates are low and our return on investments has outpaced these rates.



At the congregational meeting in November, I explained how important it is to sustain our investment portfolio as the income derived from it is one of the three key components (giving, trusts, investments) of our income that funds our ministries. Because our level of giving is where we have the most control, how much we give and where it goes can make a big difference.

Your offerings that come in as “current fund”, “weekly”, or “general” are used to fund our general operating expenses. The mortgage payments will come out of the “current” aka general fund expenses. We know, however, that there are those who want to designate their giving, so it is used specifically for the mortgage debt.

The Finance Committee wants to communicate to all of you on how designated giving dollars related to our debt will be used for 2021:

Because the Capital Campaign officially ended, any giving marked or designated as Capital Campaign will be used to pay the monthly mortgage obligation. At the end of the 2021 calendar year the total Capital Campaign donation amount for the year that exceeds \$158,700 (\$13,225 Monthly Mortgage Payment X 12 Months) will go to the bank as a reduction in principle. For example, if at the end of 2021 we add up the total Capital Campaign giving and the total ends up at \$170,000, we will send Fulton Bank \$11,300 (\$170,000 - \$158,700) to reduce our debt.

For any giving or donations designated for Principal Reduction will be used to make principal only payments to Fulton Bank.

Any giving designated for Mortgage will be used only toward paying the monthly mortgage payment.

The Finance team hopes this helps clarify any concerns or questions about your offerings and where your gifts will be used.

## 2021 Church Offering Envelopes

Church offering envelopes for the 2021 calendar year are prepared and are available in the Good Shepherd Room. Please make every effort to collect your packet. The envelopes are in a tablet form so that each week's envelope can simply be torn out and brought with you to worship or simply add a stamp and mail to the office if you aren't able to attend. This will save using an envelope and addressing an envelope. Also remember that you may contribute to the ministry of the congregation through electronic giving. See the church website [stpaulsnyork.org](http://stpaulsnyork.org) and click on the “Donate” button. Thanks for taking responsibility and securing your envelope packet for the 2021 and for your faithful support of St. Paul's mission and ministry.



## Council Highlights

The Congregation Council gathered for their regular meeting on December 14 at 7:00 PM in person at Christ Hall and through Zoom. The meeting was opened with devotions and prayer by Deacon Harold Sargeant.

The November meeting Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report indicated that if envelope giving continues at the current rate the congregation would reach a milestone with member giving passing \$300,000.

Mike Hanson was appointed to Congregation Council for one year. This appointment fulfills one year of the term vacated by the resignation of Deacon Ellen Doughty.

The election of Council Officers yielded: Tristan Ericson, President; Nancy Bennett, Vice-president; Kathryn Wicker, Secretary; Peter O'Conor, Treasurer.

Those leaving council were thanked for their dedication, service, and Christian witness. They are Tony Culp, Deacon Ellen Doughty, Denise Rider, and Deacon Harold Sargeant.

The report of the COVID-19 Task force was received. The recommendation for the preschool to close until January was received by the Preschool Committee and the school closed beginning on December 14. The date to reopen will be discussed by both groups and a start date decided and communicated to the preschool families as quickly as possible in the New Year. The recommendation for the food pantry to remain open as essential to the community was received. Pantry leadership will remain in contact with the task force to review procedures and protocols. The recommendation that in-person services continue until they are banned, respectfully requesting that parishioners and guests; know the current data and risks, self-monitor and not attend if sick, quarantine if exposed or a family member is exposed to the virus, be aware of who falls into the high risk category, and to continue current mitigation efforts and consider refraining from communion at this time. After a lengthy discussion, a motion to suspend in person worship though January 10, 2021 was made. The motion was defeated.

A motion to pay preschool staff for the week of December 14, 2020 and the week of January 4, 2021 was approved.

Christmas worship plans indicate that indoor services are at or near 10% of the church nave capacity. Seating assignments have been made and will be emailed to those who made reservations the week of Christmas.

Staff Christmas gifts (including preschool staff) were discussed and a motion to repeat what was done in 2019 met with approval.

Membership lists were presented to council leadership so that they could make calls and check in with senior members as well as families with young children.

The meeting concluded at 9:35 PM with closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Reep



## 2021 Flower Chart

The 2021 flower chart is posted on the Springettsbury vestibule bulletin board. The cost of the flowers is \$30 per vase. You are welcome to sign up to provide one or both vases. After you have signed up, simply make a check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and mark it altar flowers. This is a great way to honor someone, celebrate a milestone in life, or remember a loved one. The flowers may be taken home with you at the conclusion of the 10:30 AM liturgy or you may have them given to someone who is sick, shut it, or hospitalized. If you wish, you can contact the office to reserve a date, and to provide us with all of the correct information for inclusion in the Sunday bulletin. In advance, thank you.



**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
25 W. SPRINGETTSBURY AVE.  
YORK, PA 17403  
(717) 843-8155 (717) 843-0261 (Fax)

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Thank you to all who helped to get this newsletter  
out this month!

<b>STAFF</b>	717-843-8155	Web Page: <a href="http://www.stpaulsyork.org">www.stpaulsyork.org</a>
Pastor	Reverend Stanley Reep	<a href="mailto:prreep.stpaulsyork@comcast.net">prreep.stpaulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	<a href="mailto:kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net">kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	<a href="mailto:vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net">vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Bookkeeper	Dale Zeiger	<a href="mailto:dzeiger.stpaulsyork@comcast.net">dzeiger.stpaulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	<a href="mailto:st.paulsyork@comcast.net">st.paulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Sexton	Ted Weikert	<a href="mailto:st.paulsyork@comcast.net">st.paulsyork@comcast.net</a>
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	<a href="mailto:director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com">director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com</a>



**Worship Schedule**  
Sunday Holy Eucharist  
8:00 & 10:30 AM  
5:00 PM Vespers